SECRET ENCLOSURE

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

R

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March 4, 1981

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dick Fairbanks

FROM: Ed Sanders

SUBJ: Additional Questions on Saudi Arms Sales

At the close of the February 26 hearings on the Administration's arms sales proposals for Saudi Arabia, it was noted that additional questions might be submitted for the Record. We have received the attached questions from Senators Pell and Biden. I forward them to you for an Administration response.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY F. Smelzer (MMC) DATE 10/10/85

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SECRET ENCLOSURE

1. In 1978 the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General David Jones, told the Committee, "We are assured that the Saudis intend to use the F-15 aircraft for their own national defense, and not otherwise. The Saudis have said that they do not plan to base the F-15s at any location that would threaten or provoke Israel." General Jones was asked to assess the operative capabilities of the F-15s. He told the Committee:

> If they were to take some of these to aircraft for use in the offensive role, first, they would be going into one of the most dense air defense networks in the world, that of Israel; they would be very vulnerable in that mission; and they would have a very limited capability if they tried to get an air-to-ground capability--this would be very limited; they would be exposed to very high attrition; and their country would then be naked and subject to attack.
>
> So, as an airman, I think this would be folly. I think it would be a big mistake, even though there would be a technical capability to have a very nominal offensive capability. Therefore I do not have a concern with regard to the offensive use of the F-15.

General Jones further noted:

> I would consider 60 F-15s an element. I would consider them as air defense aircraft with an extremely low potential for offense. In a way, I would have no concern about being able to handle them in the extremely unlikely event that the Saudis would make a mistake and go with a very limited capability offensively.

By contrast with this testimony, General Secord told the Committee on Thursday, February 26, 1981, in connection with the possible sale of F-15 enhancement equipment to Saudi Arabia:

> It is a common misconception, I find, that many people believe that under the current authorization, that is for the '60 F-16's without multiple bomb racks, without conformal tanks, without tankers, that they are unable to strike Israel. That is not correct at all.

> Even without the Tobuk Airbase, which many people are worried about in the northern part of Saudi Arabia, without utilizing that base, it is still possible, rather handily I might add, with the F-15s currently authorized for Saudi Arabia, to strike targets in Israel.

How can you reconcile the cited testimony as well as other testimony in 1978 downplaying the threat to Israel proposed by the F-15s with the current testimony that the F-15s, if that will be the equipment even without this sale, will be able "rather handily" to strike targets in Israel?

2. How would you now characterize the offensive threat proposed by F-15s as currently approved versus enhanced F-15s?

3. Is it correct that the F-15s can be effectively used against targets in Israel:

4. Certain difficulties occur in regard to operation of AWAC aircraft in such locations as Saudi Arabia. Could you please provide full information as to your operational experiences in Saudi Arabia with the current fleet to include special maintenance requirements, expressed downtime as compared with the norm, and other significant factors?

5. Does your experience change your estimation of the level of personnel and equipment support which would be necessary for a Saudi fleet of AWAC aircraft? Has the Department or the Air Force updated its major 1978 study of Saudi air defense requirements? If so, could any such update or related reports be provided to the Committee?

6. To what extent has this prospective sale been discussed with the Europeans? What has been their reaction?

7. Could you please provide to the Committee listings of the current aircraft inventories in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, South Yeman, Israel, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, and North Yeman?

8. How specifically are the Saudis willing to pledge not to operate F-15s from Tobuk or any other forward air force, such as Hail?

9. Have they been asked to give written assurance or, only, verbal assurance? In either event, what is the precise language of any assurance which you consider firm? How binding do you consider these assurances to be?

March 3, 1981
GWA/ms

27 February 1981

QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR BIDEN

1. How many U.S. personnel are currently in Saudi Arabia in support of previous FMS sales and contracts? For the F-15s, each F-15 enhancement, refueling capability, and airborne surveillance, how many additional U.S. personnel would be required, and for how long?

2. How many U.S. military personnel are required for the support of current and anticipated FMS contracts with Saudi Arabia? How many current and anticipated contract personnel have prior military service? How many of these personnel have military specialties in which US armed forces are in short supply? What are the salaries and compensation for contract personnel compared with the salaries and compensation for U.S. military personnel performing similar work?

3. Please list, by type, quantity and dollar cost, the equipment and services contracted for by Saudi Arabia since January 1, 1978 and the dates delivered or scheduled for delivery.

4. Please list military equipment and services purchasedby Saudi Arabia from other countries since January 1, 1978.

5. In return for the F-15 equipment, airborne surveillance, and refueling capability, what assurances do we have from Saudi Arabia regarding the Camp David agreements, the PLO, the strategic petroleum reserve, stationing of US military personnel, or other bilateral issues?

6. If Saudi Arabia becomes involved in armed conflict and it is determined that US personnel necessary for the support or operation of US-provided equipment are not to be involved, how will U.S. personnel and sensitive technologies and components be protected?

7. Has the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency participated in the studies of Saudi military requirements which have led to these proposed sales? What are the views of ACDA on these sales?

8. What are the current inventory objectives of the US Air Force and Navy for AIM-9 L/M missiles at the end of FY86? What are the current inventories of such missiles? If the Saudis purchase the maximum number of such missiles, when will the USAF and USN fulfill their 1986 inventory objectives?

9. Please provide copies of any studies made concerning Saudi needs for AIM-9L versus AIM-9J (or P-3). What studies have been done and what conclusions reached regarding the sensitivity of AIM-9L technology and the risks of providing such equipment to Saudi Arabia?

10. The Commander in Chief of the Strategic Air Command has testified that "Current air refueling assets are insufficient to carry out even our most fundamental tasks." He has also said that additional assets will be required when B-52s are equipped with ALCMs and for other tactical missions. Does the US Government plan to provide the Saudis with KC-135s from our current inventories? How many? What impact, and over what time period, will this have on SAC and TAC mission requirements?

11. How many AWACS would be required for full border coverage of Saudi Arabia 24 hours/day? How much will 5 AWACS provide? Does the US Government see any current need for more than 5?

13. In FY81, the unit cost for an AWACS with initial spares was $136 million. What cost estimates support a unit cost of only $120 million for aircraft that will not be built and delivered for several years?

14. Please provide copies of any studies comparing costs and capabilities of AWACS, E-2C, and ground radar in Saudi Arabia.

15. Will the AWACS sold to Saudi Arabia contain: the world's largest airborne computer; our largest and most advanced look-down radar; a tracking capability of 100 targets; a radar search radius of 300+ nm if target is above radar horizon; downlinks for netting with ground radars? If these sensitive technologies fell into hostile hands, would US security be adversely affected?

16. What capabilities for offensive action against Israel did Saudi Arabia have in 1978? What capabilities will they have with the F-15 enhancements plus AWACS?

17. Please compare current and projected Saudi air defense capabilities against: the Soviet Union, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Ethiopia.